

Amdt. dated May 9, 2005
Reply to Office action of 08/05/2004

Serial No. 09/998,463
Docket No. TUC920010104US1
Firm No. 0018.0109

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims have been placed in a condition for allowance

Applicants have amended the claims to place all remaining non-canceled claims in a condition for allowance. In an informal conversation conducted with the Examiner on May 9, 2005 the Examiner has indicated to the Applicants that the claims being presented in the current amendment will place the claims of the application in a condition for allowance. The Examiner is requested to contact the Applicants should he have any further questions.

Additionally, in several conversations conducted with the Examiner before May 9, 2005, the Examiner had indicated that in addition to any indications provided in the advisory action dated 4/27/2005, claims 3, 21, 39 and claims 9, 27, 45 would also be patentable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Canceled claims

Applicants have canceled claims 1-2, 8, 19-20, 26, 37-54, 57, 60, 63, wherein previously presented claim 64 has been renumbered correctly as claim 63 in the present amendment.

Claims 3, 5, 58 have been written in independent form

Claims 3, 5, 58 have been written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicants submit that independent claims 3, 5, 58 are patentable over the cited art and is in a condition for allowance.

Claims 21, 23, 59 have been written in independent form

Claims 21, 23, 59 have been written in independent form including the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicants submit that independent claims 21, 23, 59 are patentable over the cited art and is in a condition for allowance.

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Claims 4, 6-7, 9-18, 22, 24-25, 27-36, 55-56, 61-62

Claims 4, 6-7, 9-18, 22, 24-25, 27-36, 55-56, 61-62 currently depend directly or indirectly on independent claims 3, 5, 21, 23, 58 or 59 which are patentable for the reasons discussed above. Therefore, dependent claims 4, 6-7, 9-18, 22, 24-25, 27-36, 55-56, 61-62 are in a condition for allowance.

For the above reasons the pending claims 3-7, 9-18, 21-25, 27-36, 55-56, 58-59, 61-62 are in a condition for allowance.

Conclusion

For all the above reasons, Applicant submits that the pending claims 3-7, 9-18, 21-25, 27-36, 55-56, 58-59, 61-62 are patentable over the art of record. Should any additional fees beyond the fees indicated in the transmittal be required, please charge Deposit Account No. 09-0449.

The attorney/agent of invites the Examiner to contact him at (310) 557-2292 if the Examiner believes such contact would advance the prosecution of the case.

Dated: May 9, 2005

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